

# Looks Back To Days Gone Aglimmering

PERSONAL MEMORIES OF  
DUXBURY AND OF ITS  
CITIZENS 70 YEARS AGO  
By DR. JOHN ADAMS  
(Continued from last week)

A frequent visitor to Duxbury was my late uncle, Josiah Peterson Ryder, who was at one time Dean of Drexel Institute in Philadelphia. He bought the house now occupied by Dr. Deaton and gave it to my aunt who was the wife of Josiah Peterson, the storekeeper, and we nephews contributed to her support while she lived. On her death the house was sold to the then President of Drexel Institute, Dr. Godfrey, and later purchased by Dr. Deacon, who now occupies it. His office building is a studio which my uncle, Josiah, built for an adopted daughter, Hattie Corey.

I must mention the personalities who contributed so much to our happiness and pleasure in Duxbury, and, although not residents, have been frequent visitors to Duxbury. One is Helen Gray, who is now over 90. I knew her in East Boston before she was married. She came from one of the well-established families in that community and she is a person beloved and honored by us all. Mrs. Mildred House came to Duxbury in 1880 and stayed at the Manson House next to Reuben Peterson as a child and has been a visitor through the summers. I do not know of any individual who loves Duxbury and its surroundings as she does.

## Old Duxbury

In commenting on the adults of Duxbury at this time, I cannot but refer to the quotation of Ben Jonson who once said: "That Old Bald Cheater Time, Beware of Him." These personalities I have written about represent to me a class of people of typical New England representatives. It is impossible to remember all of them and any omissions are due to lack of memory rather than to any intention on my part to disregard what somebody else might consider an outstanding character in the old history of Duxbury. I can only say that Duxbury to me in those days was a veritable Arcadia.

It was a happy community in which to live. Everybody knew everybody else and although there were certain altercations, discussions and disagreements, such as when the bridge was built, still they were left severely alone by any central government and settled their own affairs and attended to their own local problems with an honesty and integrity which is certainly lacking in these days. Whether the rapid growth of Duxbury is healthy or unhealthy is hard for anybody to prophesy, but I feel definitely that the state of, not only Duxbury, but of our country as a whole, rests on the youth of this generation. I deplore the controversies about our public school system. The discussions are bound to bring forth animosities.

I have had the good fortune to talk before many parent-teacher associations, which I think is one of the most important groups of local citizens that any town can have. I am not so sure but what the fundamental troubles, not only with our educational system, but generally throughout the country, can be traced back to the parents. I know the modern child is tired and sick at hearing about "when I was a boy we had to do this and that," but I speak from personal experience when I say that my father's attitude towards us boys was our making and good fortune in the development of our future. He believed thoroughly that a boy should give up half the day in Duxbury to working on the place, creating by putting things in the ground to grow, and to read instructive books. Our place was always at the home fireside playing the games of backgammon, cribbage, and others, and enjoying the old-fashioned candy-pulls. My mother instituted our spelling bees. I shudder at the contrast of that type of life with what is going on at the present time. Television, for illustration, is one of the worst influences to be brought into the home, as far as children are concerned. The character of the programs is such as to send many of the children off to bed with memories of exciting western life or of shooting bank robberies and all sorts of disconcerting modern influences.

## Home Life Needed

Home life is gradually disappearing. The fireside has no more allurements to the child owing to the automobile. Too much freedom of life is dealt out to them. I know whereof I speak because I have had contact with PTA's and know that many families feel that the schools are responsible for everything pertaining to their children and that because they pay certain taxes it is up to the teachers to conduct the proper line of education. How many mothers and fathers ever talk over the moral side of life with their children? How many of them ever explain what that means? How many of them try to impress on the children the value of a dollar? How many demand that these children per-

form certain duties at home to show their response to the kindnesses and affection handed out to them? The maternal instinct is the most beautiful and lasting thing in life, but with that maternal love and instinct there should be a quiet demand for something in return in the form of appreciation and obedience. The future of this country certainly depends on the growing youth of today and as I see it in my contacts in medicine with patients I do not find the stability of life and thought of the future and development of responsibility. I shudder to think what many parents would feel if they knew the actual truths of conditions which exist in educational institutions today, and I do not mean confined entirely to the teen-agers but even to the colleges and preparatory schools from which children are going out in the world to meet the complicated issues of life.

Political patronage is a disease eating the heart out of our country. The dishonesty and corruption which exist in our national government must of necessity reflect itself in the minds of the youth of this country. Personal

aggrandizement to the detriment of true patriotism seems to be the prime factor in much of political atmosphere. The town meeting is the only expression of personal government left. Remember this and use it to its full value. Do not neglect your local interests, and fight for decent honest government.

The Edward Turners of Washington St., returned Monday from a week in Union, Me., where they camped under the stars.

*Duxbury  
Clipper  
Oct. 2, 1952*